

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A clamp [(1), particularly]] for connecting [[the]] a first end of a flexible tubing or pipe [(2)] to a second end of a pipe [(3), this clamp having]], comprising:

a clamping band configured to mate over said first and second ends;

opposite-lying flange segments [(4, 5) that stick out essentially]] extending substantially radially outward from said clamping band; and [[and on which the clamp (1) can be tightened around the connection, characterized in that, in the region of at least one of the flange segments (4, 5) are constructed]]

means [(6)] for preventing [[the spreading of the clamp material under]] tension from spreading said clamping band, said spreading prevention means being disposed in a region proximate at least one of said opposite-lying flange segments.

Claim 2. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim 1, [[further characterized in that the means (6) for preventing spreading are arranged at least in part in the]] wherein said region is an [[of the]] angle [(7)] defined between [[the]] said clamping band [(8) of the clamp (1) and the]] and said opposite-lying flange segments [(4, 5)].

Claim 3. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim 1, [[further characterized in that the means (6) for preventing]] wherein said spreading prevention means [[have]] has at least one rib [(6.1)].

Claim 4. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim 3, [[further characterized in that the]] wherein said rib [(6.1)] is a molded [[into the clamp material as a]] bead disposed at said region.

Claim 5. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[one of claims 1 to 3, further characterized in that the]] claim 3, wherein said rib [(6.1)] is [[constructed as]] an angle sheet iron.

Claim 6. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[at least one of the preceding claims, further characterized in that the]] claim 3, wherein said rib [(6.1)] is arranged on [[the]] an outer edge of [[the clamp (1)]] said clamping band.

Claim 7. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[either claim 5 or 6, further characterized in that the]] claim 3, wherein said rib [(6.1)] is [[welded on]] secured to said clamping band by a weld.

Claim 8. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim 2, [[further characterized in that the]] wherein said spreading prevention means [[for preventing spreading consists of spot welds / weld seams, by means of which clamp components are fastened]] is a welded region for securing said opposite-lying flange segments to said clamping band.

Claim 9. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[one of the preceding claims, further characterized in that the]] claim 1, wherein said spreading prevention means [[(6) for preventing spreading]] is [[constructed as]] a rotation lock [[for the means of tightening (9)]] for tightening [[the clamp (1)]] said clamping band on said first and second ends.

Claim 10. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[one of the preceding claims, further characterized in that the]] claim 1, wherein said opposite-lying flange segments [(4, 5) that stick out radially]] have reinforcing plates [(10), which are adjusted to the contour of the clamp steps and / or have a recess (13) at the site of a rib]].

Claim 11. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[at least one of the claims 1 to 9 or 10,]] claim 1, further comprising [[characterized in that the means of tightening (9) have]] a bolt [[nut arrangement and]] having a polygon portion [(12) – for example, a square – is]] formed on [[the]] said bolt, said polygon portion [(11) and is]] being accommodated by a correspondingly formed hole [(14)] in [[the]] said opposite-lying flange segments [(4, 5)] in a manner that prevents rotation of said bolt.

Claim 12. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim 11, further [[characterized in that an undercut (15) is formed on the]] comprising a nut [[of the bolt nut arrangement]] for attachment to said bolt, said nut having an undercut for accommodating a region of [[the]] said polygon portion.

Claim 13. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[at least one of the preceding claims, further characterized in that]] claim 1, wherein said spreading prevention means [(6) for preventing spreading are furnished]] is disposed on [[the two]] said opposite-lying flange segments [(4, 5) and the means for tightening (9) are constructed as a reverse system and, as need be, can be brought into action from one side or the other side of the flange segments (4, 5)].

Claim 14. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[at least one of the preceding claims, further characterized by a]] claim 1, wherein said clamping band [(8)] [[with]] has two free ends[[, which encompass the connection, whereby the]] defining a gap between [[the]] said two free ends [[of the clamping band (8) is]], said gap being saddled by a sliding crosspiece [(10)].

Claim 15. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim 14, [[further characterized in that the]] wherein said sliding crosspiece [(10)] is essentially square.

Claim 16. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim 14 [[or 15, further characterized in that the]] , wherein said sliding crosspiece [(10)] has a stepped impression [(24)].

Claim 17. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim 16, [[further characterized in that the]] wherein said stepped impression [(24) of the sliding crosspiece (10)], prior to assembly, extends only over a part of [[the length of its]] a perimeter of said sliding crosspiece, and wherein said [[whereas the]] sliding crosspiece [(10)], prior to assembly, is essentially flat along [[the]] a remaining part of [[the length of its]] said perimeter.

Claim 18. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[at least one of claims 1 to 17, further characterized in that the]] claim 14, wherein said sliding crosspiece [(10)] has a thickness of 0.2 mm to 0.3 mm.

Claim 19. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[at least one of claims 14 to 18, further characterized in that the]] claim 14, wherein said sliding crosspiece [(10)] is made of a high-strength material.

Claim 20. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[at least one of claims 14 to 19, further characterized in that the]] claim 14, wherein said sliding crosspiece [(10)] is made of a deformable material.

Claim 21. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[at least one of the preceding claims]] claim 1, further [[characterized in that]] comprising a sealing element [(25) is] arranged between [[the two]] said opposite-lying flange segments [(4, 5)].

Claim 22. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim 21, [[further characterized in that the]] wherein said sealing element [(25)] is strip-shaped.

Claim 23. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim [[22]] 21, [[further characterized in that the]] wherein said sealing element [(25)] has a round cross section.

Claim 24. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[one of claims 21 to 23, further characterized in that the]] claim 21, wherein said sealing element [(25)] is made of a material that is resistant to high temperature.

Claim 25. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim 23, [[further characterized in that the]] wherein said sealing element [(25)] is made of glass fiber.

Claim 26. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[at least one of the preceding claims]] claim 1, further comprising [[characterized by a clamping band (8) encircling the mutually associated ends, the clamping gap (21) of which is covered with]] a saddle [(18)] covering a clamping gap of said first and second ends defined between said opposite-lying flange segments [, wherein, on the saddle (18), those edges (19) that tightly interact with the clamping band are furnished with]] and a means [(20)] for preventing leakage [(20)] at intersecting edges of said saddle and said clamping band.

Claim 27. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim [(25)] 26, [[further characterized in that the]] wherein said means [(20)] for preventing leakage is constructed as a labyrinth seal [(20.1)].

Claim 28. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim 26, [[further characterized in that the]] wherein said intersecting edges [(19)] and [(the)] an edge [(18.1)] of an associated impression [(18.2)] in [(the)] said clamping band [(8)] have a labyrinth-like course.

Claim 29. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[one of claims 25 to 27, further characterized in that the]] claim 26, wherein said means [(20)] for preventing leakage is a plastically or elastically deformable sealing material[, which is]] arranged along [[the]] said intersecting edges [(19) of the saddle beneath the clamping material]].

Claim 30. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[at least one of the preceding claims]] claim 1, wherein [[the connection of the mutually associated ends of the flexible tubing or pipe]] said first and second ends have a butt-jointed transition[[, further characterized by]] having a continuously encircling ring [(17) that is]] arranged at [[the site of the]] said butt-jointed transition [(16) and projects radially inward]].

Claim 31. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with claim [(29)] 30, [[further characterized in that the]] wherein said continuously encircling ring [(17)] is a bead [(22) that is]] impressed into [[the material of the clamp (1)] said clamping band [[and of the saddle (18)]]].

Claim 32. (Currently amended) The clamp (1) in accordance with claim 30, [[further characterized in that the]] wherein said continuously encircling ring [(27)] is made of plastic or elastomeric material.

Claim 33. (Currently amended) The clamp [(1)] in accordance with [[at least one of claims 14 to 26, further characterized in that]] claim 26, further comprising a plastic or highly elastic sealing material is employed on [[the]] said intersecting edges.